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Third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002: preliminary assessment

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/5, entitled "Modalities for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002." The report provides an analysis of the preliminary findings of the third review and appraisal exercise, including the identification of prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options. The report also includes information on the regional preparations for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, including actions, activities and the utilization of a bottom-up participatory approach.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/5, entitled "Modalities for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002", in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission for Social Development, at its fifty-fifth session, a report including an analysis of the preliminary findings of the third review and appraisal exercise, including the identification of prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options.

2. In view of the timeline for carrying out the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, and given that the global review will take place in 2018, Member States have not yet presented their national reports to the United Nations regional commissions. Therefore, the findings outlined in the present report are preliminary in nature and are based on submissions prepared by the regional commissions using supporting information available to the Secretariat, covering the period from 2012 to 2016. The report of the Secretary-General for the global review to be held at the fifty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development will provide the basis for suggested policy options for the consideration of Member States.

3. The purpose of the report is to inform the Commission of the preliminary main findings of the third review and appraisal exercise, including the identification of key priority areas and regional perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of ageing. The report also includes information about the regional preparations to date for the third review and appraisal exercise, including actions, activities and the utilization of a bottom-up participatory approach.

II. Process to date at the regional level

4. With regard to resolution 2015/5, the Commission invited Member States to identify actions they had taken since the second review and appraisal exercise and encouraged them, inter alia, to invite organizations of older persons[1] to participate in the review process at the national and regional levels.

5. In the same resolution, the regional commissions were requested to continue to facilitate the review and appraisal exercise at the regional level by, inter alia, organizing regional review meetings, providing an analysis of the main findings and identifying key priority action areas by the end of 2017. As part of the procedure for review and appraisal laid out by the Commission, individualized approaches to the review and appraisal exercise are being taken by each regional commission to tailor the process to their respective operational realities.

6. The present section provides information on the activities planned by the regional commissions to support the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action.

7. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) undertook research activities on ageing and development in small island developing States in Africa as part of a field

[1] Those 60 years of age or older.

project on the demographic dividend in Africa. The research was built on findings and recommendations of the 2013 Africa regional review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, as well as on the report by ECA on the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. ECA seeks to harmonize and coordinate the efforts of partnerships, programmes and specialized agencies through the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, for which it serves as the secretariat, towards enhanced inter-agency arrangements regarding older persons in the regional economic communities and in its member States. In January 2016, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa was adopted by the Assembly of the African Union at its twenty-sixth ordinary session. The ratification of the Protocol is anticipated to increase awareness of the role of Governments in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals that are most relevant to older persons. ECA has developed a survey for Member States covering all areas of the Plan of Action, supplemented with questions regarding sources of data on older persons. The Commission is further cooperating with local affiliates of the civil society organization HelpAge International in 15 African countries in the collection of qualitative information from older persons themselves. A technical steering committee was established to coordinate the review and appraisal process, set the guidelines, identify the tools needed and disseminate the questionnaire to focal points in the selected member States. ECA plans to prepare an analytical report on the issues faced by older persons in Africa, highlighting the nexus between those issues and the Goals.

8. The third cycle of review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action was launched in May 2015 by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) with the issuance of guidelines for the preparation of national reports over the course of 2016. The guidelines were prepared by the Bureau of the Commission's Working Group on Ageing, together with the secretariat of ECE, and suggested that the national reports be structured around the four main goals of the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration.[2] The guidelines included a list of 22 suggested active ageing indicators, which were initially selected by the expert group on the Active Ageing Index[3] in order to reflect the outcomes of ageing policies and to measure the untapped potential of older people. Two capacity-building workshops were held to address data gaps with respect to active ageing indicators. The first workshop was held in Geneva in November 2015, and the second, a regional capacity-development workshop, was held in Minsk in June 2016 and hosted by the National Statistical Committee of Belarus. ECE plans to prepare a synthesis report based on the reports received from its member States that outlines major trends in the region, identifies key priority action areas and suggests policy responses. The synthesis report will be launched at the Ministerial Conference on Ageing, to be held in Lisbon in September 2017, on the theme "A sustainable society for all ages: realizing the potential of living longer".

9. To ensure wider involvement of various stakeholders and older people themselves in the third review and appraisal process in the region, the Working Group on Ageing set up organizing committees for non-governmental organizations

[2] ECE/AC.30/2012/3.

[3] Available from www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/AAI/Active+Ageing+Index+Home.

and research forums to contribute to preparations for the Ministerial Conference on Ageing. In addition, a number of countries plan to hold national conferences on ageing before the end of 2016 to ensure consultations with non-governmental organizations in their report preparation, with several countries of Eastern Europe receiving financial and expert support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to facilitate such participatory processes.

10. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is providing technical assistance to member States in the region that have requested help in undertaking their national review processes regarding the Madrid Plan of Action and the regional plan as expressed in the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC will also organize the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Paraguay in 2017.

11. To support policy development on ageing in the region since the last review and appraisal, the ECLAC office in Port of Spain organized a conference on ageing, elder abuse and the rights of older people, held in Roseau on 30 November and 1 December 2015. In addition, ECLAC published a range of material on issues related to older persons, including thematic reports on their care needs; an evaluation of policy guidelines and access to credit by older persons; a publication on ageing in the Caribbean and the rights of older persons; a book entitled "Autonomy and dignity in old age: theory and practice of policies on the rights of older people" and another on the theme of ageing and public institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean; as well as an online bulletin on ageing and development. In June 2016, ECLAC held a technical seminar on public institutions and ageing, with the goal of examining existing institutional alternatives in the region and deepening the analysis of the constraints and challenges facing government institutions dealing with ageing from a human rights perspective. In collaboration with the Senate of Chile and the country's National Service for Older Persons, ECLAC held an international seminar in July 2016 on the protection of the human rights of older persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, which involved more than 500 older persons and experts from Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba and Mexico. ECLAC organized the second follow-up meeting on the San José Charter, in partnership with the National Service for Older Persons, from 16 to 18 November 2016 at its headquarters in Santiago.

12. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) established a steering group to oversee the third regional review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, in cooperation with the regional offices of the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNFPA and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as with HelpAge International. Several member States expressed interest in carrying out national consultations to assess such progress, and ESCAP is working closely with all partners concerned to enable those stakeholder meetings to be as inclusive and comprehensive as possible. In collaboration with a number of partners, ESCAP will provide technical consulting to the countries in the region that requested assistance in undertaking their respective third review and appraisal cycle of the Plan of Action at the national level. A regional intergovernmental meeting for the review of the Plan of Action is envisaged for September 2017, with a preparatory expert meeting to be held in May 2017. A survey was launched in February 2016 to track progress on the implementation of the Plan of Action, with

several responses already received, including information on government focal points. Analysis of the survey will be undertaken and published by ESCAP. In addition, a regional expert forum on population ageing was held at ESCAP headquarters on 12 and 13 July 2016, bringing together government focal points on population ageing, development practitioners, experts and civil society. The meeting increased awareness of the key challenges to and opportunities for effectively addressing population ageing and promoting the rights of older persons in the Asia-Pacific region in the context of the third cycle of the review and appraisal of the Plan of Action. Meeting participants further reviewed and shared good practices in addressing long-term care needs and considered policies to formulate a comprehensive framework for the long-term care of older persons in the region. Participants discussed strategies to assess progress at the regional and country levels in the implementation of the Plan of Action, proposing concrete follow-up actions within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in addition to substantive research on issues related to older persons, mostly in the areas of social protection, poverty reduction and conflict and emergency situations, is planning to hold a regional meeting on the third review and appraisal in 2017. The Commission informed its member States of the steps taken and milestones reached in the third regional review and appraisal cycle and requested the nomination of national focal points on ageing. ESCWA, in cooperation with UNFPA, the Centre for Studies on Ageing and a group of experts, is finalizing a questionnaire that addresses the three priority directions of the Madrid Plan of Action. The questionnaire aims to assess the progress made by member States in the implementation of the Plan of Action, the obstacles countries are facing and the remaining gaps in implementation. The questionnaire is expected to be sent to the nominated focal points in member countries by the end of 2016. Analysis of the survey will be undertaken and published by ESCWA and presented at the third regional review meeting. The aim of the meeting is to review progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action and to identify the main challenges, opportunities and issues of priority for the region. It will provide a platform for countries to present their national experiences, share lessons learned and good practices and reflect on two issues of importance to older persons in the region, namely, social protection and emergency situations. The main findings of the meeting, in particular the priority action areas and good practices identified and the policy responses suggested, will serve as an input to the global review.

Contribution of the United Nations system to the third review and appraisal

14. UNFPA recently began a five-year project in collaboration with Statistics Korea, the central organization for statistics in the Republic of Korea. The first major activity of the project is the preparation of a stocktaking report on the theme "The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: where are we fifteen years later?" that will measure progress in fulfilling the commitments made by Governments during the Second World Assembly on Ageing, in 2002, and in implementing the recommendations of the Madrid Plan of Action. The report will focus on a select number of major issues under each of the three priority directions of the Plan of Action: (a) older persons and development; (b) advancing health and

well-being into older age; and (c) ensuring enabling and supportive environments. The report will be the contribution of UNFPA to the third review and appraisal. It will illustrate progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action by region, providing specific country examples, and include the voices of older persons gleaned from focus group discussions in select countries. The report will highlight key issues of particular importance in each region, point to emerging concerns and provide recommendations for action to improve the quality of life of older persons. In addition, UNFPA is supporting HelpAge International in coordinating the above-mentioned series of focus groups to elicit the views of older women and men on the impact of national actions relating to the Plan of Action's three priority directions. Focus group meetings will be conducted in both rural and urban settings in a number of countries. The results of those meetings will contribute to the Fund's review report.

III. Preliminary findings on prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options

A. Social protection

15. All older persons have the right to a decent standard of living. The growth in the proportion and number of older persons highlights both the importance and the challenge of staving off poverty and income insecurity in old age. Governments in all regions recognize their role in reducing the vulnerabilities associated with old age and the need to adapt to the rapid pace of population ageing and changing social norms. The adoption and strengthening of social protection schemes for older persons as a strategy to tackle poverty and exclusion is thus in evidence in many countries, and the issue has been cited by each regional commission as a regional priority.

16. The income security of older persons increasingly relies on old-age pensions. Most older persons do not possess adequate savings or other assets to provide for their well-being and avoid poverty throughout old age. The eventual functional decline of older workers limits the stability of their income from employment. Age-based discrimination in the labour force also affects the incomes of older persons, in particular in developed countries.[4] At the same time, decreasing family sizes and growing labour demands on family members mean that fewer older persons can depend on relatives to assist with unmet financial needs. Between 2010 and 2012, only 51.5 per cent of all people above statutory pensionable age received an old-age pension.[5] Most older persons with pension coverage live in developed countries and worked or continue to work in the formal sector. Although the level of coverage in Europe and North America exceeds 90 per cent, levels are far lower in other regions. In Latin America and the Caribbean and in Asia and the Pacific, levels are close to the global average, with 56 per cent and 47 per cent of older persons, respectively, receiving a pension. In North Africa and the Middle East, around 1 in 3

[4] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Live Longer, Work Longer* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2006).

[5] ILO, *World Social Protection Report 2014/15: building economic recovery, inclusive development and social justice* (Geneva, 2014).

older persons has a pension (37 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively), and in sub-Saharan Africa, 17 per cent of older persons, fewer than 1 in 5, receives a pension. Even where pension schemes are in place, many fall short of providing income security to some or all beneficiaries, with benefits that are insufficient to meet basic needs and to stay out of poverty.

17. During the period between 2000 and 2010, important gains were made in expanding pension coverage in many countries, including to informal sector workers.[5] Since 2010, however, many developed and developing countries have been reducing expenditures or experiencing the effects of having done so during the second phase of the recent global economic crisis. Between 2010 and 2013, pension reforms, including raising retirement ages, increasing contributions, lowering benefits and lowering pension tax exemptions, were the fourth most common adjustment measure, undertaken by 47 developing countries and 39 high-income countries.[5] Some developing countries, however, have directed the proceeds of their various adjustment measures, which ranged from pension reforms to reduced subsidies, towards targeted safety nets for those living in deepest poverty. In general, high-income countries have limited various social protection benefits, whereas many middle-income countries have strengthened their social protection systems, and some lower-income countries have created or broadened narrow schemes that provide a low level of benefits. At present, more than 20 low-income and middle-income countries have achieved universal or nearly universal social protection schemes, and more than 100 others are extending the coverage and benefits of schemes to new social groups.[6] Old-age pensions are in fact the most frequently realized element of universal social protection.

18. Pension reforms have also been a response to demographic changes, whereby there is a declining number of working-age persons to pay into pension systems and other support mechanisms for older persons. Although many countries had initiated reforms prior to the crisis to ensure the long-term sustainability of their pension systems, the economic crisis triggered more severe spending cuts.[5]

19. Since the second review and appraisal, Governments have made significant efforts to establish, expand and improve pension coverage, as well as to secure the long-term integrity of existing pension systems. Many countries have extended the reach of pension schemes. For example, in 2016, Argentina introduced a universal pension for older persons, guaranteeing a minimum income to persons over 65 years of age who had not made any pension contributions or did not qualify for the standard Government pension plan. Similarly, Nicaragua now provides a reduced pension to older persons who have not met a minimum period of contributions. In 2016, Kuwait enacted a law on social protection for older persons that included several entitlements such as the right to a monthly allowance and free health care. In 2013, India established the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority

[6] According to ILO, universal social protection includes adequate cash transfers for all who need them, especially children; benefits and support for people of working age in case of maternity, disability, work injury or for those without jobs; and pensions for all older persons. Such protection can be provided through social insurance, tax-funded social benefits, social assistance services, public works programmes and other schemes guaranteeing basic income security. See also World Bank, "World Bank, ILO announce new push for universal social protection", press release (21 September 2016).

and encouraged voluntary participation in the pension fund through a scheme called "NPS-Lite", with the provision of annual co-contributions. In Zambia, the National Social Protection Policy, which was approved in 2014, incorporated a social cash transfer scheme for vulnerable older persons. In Burkina Faso, the National Social Protection Policy of 2012 also included cash transfers to older persons living in poverty and financing for a national pension fund for public civil servants. Indonesia is working on pension reform to expand coverage and to include the informal sector.

20. Governments have also taken a range of measures to improve existing pension benefits. The Government of Estonia is indexing pensions to the rate of inflation and is committed to keeping average pensions exempt from income tax. In 2013, it added a pension supplement for older persons who were raising a child, and plans to implement a support scheme in 2017 for pensioners who live alone. Côte d'Ivoire also increased pension amounts based on changes in the cost of living. Mongolia has made it a priority to undertake such plans and has already equalized both the basic pension amount and the retirement age for men and women. Between 2011 and 2014, it significantly increased funds directed towards pensions. Recently, the Government of Georgia also increased public spending on pensions, while Kazakhstan increased its pension payments. In 2015, the Russian Federation implemented a new procedure to ensure an adequate pension level.

21. Several pension reforms have been undertaken to unify disparate schemes and otherwise improve their efficiency. A prominent example is the merger by China in 2014 of its rural and urban pension schemes into a unified public scheme for all employees, which, inter alia, equalized pension rights and opportunities and improved the portability of pension entitlements.[5] Similarly, the Republic of Korea conducted a comprehensive pension reform in 2015, merging its national pension scheme with its basic social pension.[7]

22. Many Governments also have been taking or exploring measures to improve the financial efficiency of pension schemes with a view to their sustainability, in particular by raising pension contributions and increasing the age of retirement, the latter reflecting increased life expectancies. Indonesia has plans to increase its contribution rates, while Côte d'Ivoire increased its social contribution rate for employees and employers and also raised its retirement age in 2012. In 2014, Zambia increased its retirement age from 55 to 65, while retaining the option to retire at 55. Jordan raised the age of early retirement. Retirement ages are also becoming more flexible. In 2015, the Russian Federation created the opportunity to take later retirement, while the Government of Estonia agreed to discuss the possibility of developing a pension system with a flexible retirement age. Estonia is also considering the promotion of employer pensions.

[7] ESCAP, "Income security for older persons in the Republic of Korea", Social Development Division-Social Policy and Population Section Project Working Paper Series (Bangkok, ESCAP, 2015).

B. Care

23. At this early stage in the review process, issues of health and care continue to be high on the agenda in all regions, with some particular nuances and developments in terms of focus.

Promotion of "ageing in place" in the community with due regard to individual preferences and affordable housing options

24. Efforts to promote ageing in place,[8] de-institutionalization and care within the community have continued to expand. In many cases, that has included an approach that ECE has termed "active care", which supports and empowers older persons to have choices and participate in decisions about their own care.[9] For example, the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland approved the Care Act of 2014, which reorganized the care and support system for the first time in 60 years and brought together various pieces of legislation. The aim was to make the system easier to understand and give greater control to those in need of support and their families. The Act, inter alia, set new criteria for the entitlement of clients to care from local authorities and changed and standardized the assessment of those requesting support, basing the assessments on interviews with the client that take into account their wishes and objectives, as well as the need for informal support for caregivers. In addition, the Act provides greater regulation of those providing professional care.[10] This trend towards choice in social care in general reflects a human rights-based approach to policymaking and legislation in the care sector.

25. The Government of Estonia notes that the country's social welfare policy for the period 2016-2023 was developed with support being provided by the European Social Fund and the European Regional Fund until 2020. The policy is guided by the principle of providing support to enable older persons and their family members to remain employed and independent and to live at home as long as possible. It is oriented towards prevention, reduction of the need for institution-based care and the promotion of de-institutionalization through, inter alia, the expansion of a number of social care services such as home care, day care, transportation and personal assistance; new and innovative video and audio care services and alarm buttons; as well as social counselling services for families provided by social workers, legal experts and psychologists. The Government estimates that, to date, it has reached 10,500 persons with disabilities, older persons and their families through such services.

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[8] The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States of America define ageing in place as the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income or ability level. See www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/terminology.htm.

[9] ECE, "Innovative and empowering strategies for care", Policy Brief on Ageing, No. 15 (Geneva, ECE, February 2015).

[10] See the reply by the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/OlderPersons/IE/Pages/MIPAA.aspx.

26. The Government of Estonia indicated that it planned to establish a high-level committee to map the most important care-related problems and to propose solutions, including financing schemes. In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs is preparing needs-based assessment methodologies to better integrate social and health-care services in order to offer the best possible assistance, to prevent the worsening of problems and to reduce the use of institutional care.[11]

27. ESCAP reports that the Government of China, as an objective of its Twelfth Five-Year Plan on Ageing (2011-2015), which prioritizes the development of long-term care and rehabilitation services, is building an in-home care model that integrates medical and social services. The Government of Thailand is also currently implementing a pilot project to develop community-based long-term care, which it aims to expand.

28. In Australia, changes were planned in 2015 to ensure that older persons in need of care have real opportunities to make informed decisions and are supported in their choices. Through the "My Aged Care" online information system, older people and their families can access comprehensive information on the system of aged care services and how to obtain such services. It includes information on all Government-funded aged care services and fee estimators that growing numbers of clients are using to compare services and make decisions.

Regulation of care services and institutions

29. Although the practice is already widespread in developed countries, there has been a noticeable move by some low- and middle-income countries to legislate and provide guidelines for the provision of care services at home and in institutions. The Government of Kyrgyzstan has set minimum standards for social services in residential facilities run by the State. The Government also adopted a decision, which sets out standards for the provision of social services to older persons in day care and social welfare establishments. The Government of Bahrain published a procedural manual for nursing homes in 2014 that included administrative procedures and guidance on services and job descriptions. In Australia, the User Rights Principles (2014) and the Charter of Care Recipients' Rights and Responsibilities (Home Care) are being updated to reflect the rights and responsibilities of consumers and the responsibilities of care providers with respect to consumer-directed care.

30. Although institutional care for older persons in sub-Saharan Africa is not widespread, some Governments have recognized that, while the role of the family as the provider of such care is still the norm, there is now a need to regulate those care institutions that exist to care for older persons who are neglected or homeless. The Government of Kenya noted that a number of care homes had been established informally by charities.[12] In the case of Zambia, guidelines for care homes operated by the Government are being prepared.[13] ECA notes that the pace of population

[11] See the reply by the Government of Estonia to the questionnaire of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

[12] Isabella Aboderin and others, "Human rights and residential care for older adults in sub-Saharan Africa: case study of Kenya", in *Towards Human Rights in Residential Care for Older Persons: international perspectives* (London, Routledge, 2016).

[13] See the reply by the Government of Zambia to the questionnaire of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

ageing, combined with the impact of social and economic factors on society, means that family support will no longer be the sole viable means of social security for older persons. This points towards the need for further regulation of care services in sub-Saharan Africa.

C. Health care

Advancing health and well-being into old age

31. Dementia currently affects 47 million people worldwide; that figure is likely to double by 2030 and triple by 2050.[14] As was evident during the second review and appraisal exercise, the growing number of older persons suffering from Alzheimer's disease and dementia has slowly led to the development of more action plans, policies and strategies, albeit mostly in developed countries. As noted by ECE, national strategic plans are still relatively new in the region. In addition, as pointed out by Alzheimer's Disease International, a recent study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development concluded that, even in developed countries, "dementia receives the worst care" with an over-reliance on informal family care.[15]

32. Since the second review, a comprehensive dementia plan has been launched in Norway that focuses, inter alia, on the development of research, data and planning, appropriate care and services, improvement in the sharing and dissemination of information and the establishment of partnerships with families and local communities. Malta has a plan for the period 2015-2023, and the plan of Costa Rica (one of the few developing countries to have formulated a plan) covers the period 2014-2024. Austria is currently in the process of drafting a strategy for dementia, following the completion of its national report on dementia in 2014; Slovenia is engaged in similar action. Italy and Switzerland both have launched relevant strategies.

33. Since only around half of those affected by Alzheimer's disease in high-income countries, and 1 in 10 or fewer of those in low- and middle-income countries, have received a diagnosis, some countries, in particular middle-income and developing countries, are at the initial stages of programme development in this area. For example, the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia is elaborating a concept paper on the development of affordable and quality services for people with dementia and the development of telecare services by the end of 2019. Lebanon issued an awareness-raising information kit on Alzheimer's disease in 2012, but in a majority of developing countries, most of the awareness-raising activities and informal training for family caregivers that does exist is carried out solely by civil society.

Maintenance of capacity throughout the life course

34. The Economic Commission for Europe notes that the concept of active ageing is based on the promotion of good health, participation and security. The Active

[14] WHO and Alzheimer's Disease International, *Dementia: a public health priority* (Geneva, 2012).

[15] OECD, "Addressing dementia: the OECD Response", OECD Health Policy Studies (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2015).

Ageing Index was used by member States during the second review process to monitor progress in the implementation of the Commission's Regional Strategy on Ageing. Since then, many Governments have increasingly turned their attention to the development of similar frameworks, policies and programmes that support the maintenance of the functional capacity as people age in order to reduce dependency and to support empowerment and economic, social and political participation. For example, Estonia adopted an active ageing development plan for the period 2013-2020 on strategies for an age-inclusive society. More recently, the Government of Singapore adopted an action plan for successful ageing in 2016 which covers, inter alia, the areas of care, employment, lifelong learning, health, social engagement and volunteering.

35. The approach is also visible in the reorientation of a number of government health services to focus on the rehabilitation of older persons in order to maintain and restore functional ability and independent living as much as possible. For example, in Ontario, Canada, a pilot project called "Assess and Restore" was launched, with the aim of helping older persons to recover from illness and injury so that they could continue to live at home. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in Ontario included the project in its strategy for the period 2013-14, with 69 funded pilot projects that focused on restoring the functional skills and abilities of frail older persons. Those projects were aimed at providing care and rehabilitation services in the community through day clinics, outpatient services and in-home rehabilitative services, thereby keeping older persons out of hospitals. The project also developed tools to help identify older persons at risk, thereby preventing or delaying loss of function.

36. For some countries, in particular those with "young" demographic profiles, the recognition that the health care of older persons is a priority is a marker of progress in the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. For example, in 2014, Kuwait established a department for health services to older persons within the Ministry of Health.

D. Human rights

37. The aim of the Madrid Plan of Action is to ensure that people everywhere are able to age with security and dignity and continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights. Since 2012, there has been growing attention to and discussion of the human rights of older persons. Several Member States have pursued a variety of legislative, policy and programmatic approaches to address the protection of the rights of older persons as called for in the Plan of Action. For example, in Argentina, the Government has adopted a human rights-based approach for all plans, policies, programmes and projects. Mexico, since reforming its constitution in 2011, has strengthened its regulatory, policy and institutional frameworks to recognize and realize the human rights of older persons in line with those of other population groups. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees is planning to establish a reporting system that reflects the principles of the Plan of Action that is aimed at more coherently monitoring the rights of older persons. In Czechia, securing and protecting the human rights of older persons is one of the strategic areas of the National Action Plan for Positive Ageing for the period 2013-2017.

38. Since the second review and appraisal, there have been notable regional developments with regard to strengthening the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons, namely, the adoption of two legally binding instruments: the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, by the Organization of American States in June 2015, and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, by the African Union in January 2016.

39. Employers, along with health-care, financial and insurance providers in many parts of the world continue to discriminate against older persons, with older women often experiencing multiple forms of discrimination resulting from their gender-based roles in society. Several Member States have taken measures to combat age discrimination and address issues related to the inclusion of older persons in society. For example, Malta recently adopted policy initiatives to promote awareness of ageism and age discrimination and to expand legal definitions to reflect both the direct and indirect nature of age discrimination and the fact that it can manifest as victimization and harassment and that supporting age discrimination is also an unlawful act. The country also launched a participatory awareness-raising campaign on equality and discrimination issues that was linked to Madrid Plan of Action recommendations, including encouraging older persons to express their views on the effects of discrimination.

40. The Government of Georgia adopted an anti-discrimination law in 2014, which clearly states, inter alia, that it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of age. Recognizing that its Equal Treatment Act was applicable only to employment and vocational education, the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia initiated amendments to the Act in 2016 that were aimed at expanding the principle of equal treatment to social welfare, health services and social security benefits, as well as to public goods and services, including housing. In 2015, the Government of Australia requested the country's Human Rights Commission to conduct an inquiry into practices, attitudes and laws that affect the equal participation of older persons and those with disabilities in employment. Also in 2015, the Government appointed the then Age Discrimination Commissioner, Susan Ryan, as the first-ever Ambassador for Mature Age Employment to help develop greater awareness among employers of the business benefits of hiring older workers and to help open new doors for job seekers. Mexico, as part of its 2012 labour law reforms, included provisions protecting the right of older adults to decent work under conditions of equality and non-discrimination. In Ecuador, the National Council for Intergenerational Equality recently drafted proposals for public policies relating to older persons with the aim of reducing income inequality gaps. The Government of Malta is currently pursuing policies to address the specific concerns of older lesbian women and gay men and the human rights implications of their sexual identities on citizenship later in life.

41. The second review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action showed that neglect, abuse and violence against older persons had become a concern for Member States in all regions, regardless of their level of development (see A/68/167). Older women face greater risk of physical and psychological abuse owing to discriminatory societal attitudes and the non-realization of women's human rights. Since 2012, a growing number of Governments have acknowledged that elder abuse is a highly prevalent, often hidden and complex reality, and several Member States have made significant efforts to combat it. For example, the Government of Malta

increased recognition of elder abuse and neglect through research, public education and the training of persons working in the social and health-care sectors, including police officers. It also developed a strategy to empower older adults to report abuse. In addition, Malta put in place legal amendments to protect older persons from abuse and neglect, introduced harsher penalties for crimes, incorporated new forms of deterrents into the Criminal Code and worked to develop an adult protection act for vulnerable and older persons. In many countries, such as Lebanon and Nicaragua, the abuse of older persons continues to fall under domestic violence legislation. In 2014, Lebanon adopted legislation that penalizes domestic family violence, including against older persons. However, that protection only covers abuse committed within the home. A recent report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons and the Second World Assembly on Ageing noted recent findings drawing specific attention to the abuse and violence directed at older women accused of witchcraft (see A/70/185). Since the second review and appraisal cycle, Burkina Faso has implemented a National Plan of Action for the period 2012-2016 against the social exclusion of persons accused of witchcraft, with specific attention to older women.

42. Access to justice for older persons was among the main themes discussed at the third working session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, held in New York from 21 to 24 August 2012, where particular attention was given to promoting knowledge and awareness among older persons of the full range of their rights, to their having reasonable pathways to exercise those rights and to their having reasonable legal resources and self-help avenues of redress to remedy and prevent the loss of those rights (see A/AC.278/2012/1). In Costa Rica, in July 2016, the National Council of Older Persons, in partnership with the University of Costa Rica, established a legal office to guide older persons requiring legal advice, legal representation in judicial and administrative procedures and extrajudicial legal counselling.

E. Disaster and other emergency situations and participation of civil society in policy governance

43. Some countries are devoting increasing attention to addressing the distinct needs and concerns of older persons in disasters and other emergency situations. The issue of older persons in disaster and emergency contexts has been emphasized by ECLAC and ESCWA. For instance, in Chile, the National Service for Older Persons convened a round table on addressing emergencies in long-term care institutions for national entities with jurisdiction in such situations. The first output of the round table was a guide on long-term care establishments for older persons in the context of regional emergency plans that was directed at the regional offices of the National Service and at administrators, staff and residents of long-term care establishments to guide them in developing their own action plans for emergency and/or disaster preparedness that, while based on government-issued methodologies on civil protection, also reflect regional and local needs.

44. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia is conducting substantive research on older persons and conflict and related emergency situations and has identified the need to develop age-responsive emergency preparedness and

relief plans and programmes as a priority for older persons in the region. Western Asia has been experiencing social movements, violent conflicts and political instability that have resulted in humanitarian crises and a growing number of refugees.[16] The adverse effects of conflict on the rights and well-being of older persons have been exacerbated by their specific needs. For instance, a large majority of older Syrian refugees in Lebanon, who describe their overall health as poor, cannot afford needed medication, with most also fully dependent on humanitarian assistance for their needs. At the same time, the potential of older persons to make important contributions to emergency response is often overlooked. Such contributions should be supported.

45. Within the Asia-Pacific region, the Government of Viet Nam endorsed a plan to expand the model of intergenerational self-help clubs nationwide, with Government funds allocated to finance club activities. Those self-help clubs play an important role in local development by supporting disaster response, building livelihood security, improving health care and promoting participation in community life and in governance.[17]

46. With regard to the participation of older persons, ECE has observed growing involvement by civil society, especially that of organizations of older persons, in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies addressing the rights, needs and fulfilment of the potential of older persons. Despite uneven progress on the issue across regions and countries, many countries in that region have boards and groups for older persons with consultative status at the national, regional or local policymaking levels. In Eastern Europe, in particular, there has been more active civil society engagement on ageing issues.

IV. Recommendations

47. The Commission for Social Development, at its fifty-sixth session, in 2018, will conduct the global segment of the third review and appraisal cycle of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002. In the first two cycles, the review was carried out in the form of plenary panels with representatives of each regional group of Member States complementing the findings and outcomes of the regional review and appraisal processes conducted by the regional commissions.

48. In the lead-up to the third review and appraisal, the regional commissions suggested a number of substantive and organizational ideas to more fully highlight the outcomes of the regional processes, including the following:

(a) Holding round tables, in parallel, to focus on key topics within the three priority directions of the Madrid Plan of Action and prepare recommendations to guide work in those areas;

[16] Rouba Arja, "Responding to ageing in crisis situations: live experience from Arab countries", *Gerontechnology*, vol. 12, No 4 (2014), pp. 214-218.

[17] HelpAge International, "Government of Viet Nam officially endorsed plan to expand intergenerational self-help club model nationwide". Available from www.ageingasia.org.

(b) Focusing on building complementarities and synergies, as well as bridging gaps between the Madrid Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in terms of frameworks and reporting;

(c) Debating and agreeing upon a global road map or strategy on ageing for the next five years;

(d) Organizing two panel events, with the first panel comprised of Member States representing each region, to highlight regional perspectives, and the second featuring a keynote speaker, to be followed by a panel of global experts;

(e) Ending the session with the adoption of a resolution on the critical importance of ageing issues and the Madrid Plan of Action and with a focus on a few key follow-up actions.

49. Member States may wish to take the recommendations into consideration in elaborating the programme of work for the fifty-sixth session of the Commission.